

Article - General Provisions

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§5–518.

(a) Except as provided in § 5–518.1 of this subtitle, after the filing or preparation of a complaint under § 5–516 of this subtitle, the Joint Ethics Committee shall review the complaint and proceed in accordance with § 5–519 of this subtitle unless, after examining the complaint and the issues raised by it, the Committee finds that further proceedings are not justified because:

- (1) the complaint is frivolous;
- (2) the complaint does not allege actions on the part of the accused legislator that provide reason to believe that a violation may have occurred;
- (3) the matters alleged are not within the jurisdiction of the Joint Ethics Committee;
- (4) the violations alleged were inadvertent, technical, or minor, or have been cured, and, after consideration of all of the circumstances then known, further proceedings would not serve the purposes of this subtitle; or
- (5) for other reasons, after consideration of all the circumstances, further proceedings would not serve the purposes of this subtitle.

(b) (1) If a finding is made under subsection (a) of this section, the Joint Ethics Committee shall:

- (i) submit a report of its conclusions to the presiding officer or to the membership of the branch of the legislature of which the accused legislator is a member, and the proceedings shall be terminated;
- (ii) provide advice or guidance to the accused legislator; or
- (iii) provide the accused legislator with an opportunity to cure any minor violation of ethical standards.

(2) (i) Subject to § 5–517 of this subtitle, notice of the Joint Ethics Committee’s action shall be provided to the accused legislator and to any person who filed the complaint.

(ii) On request, the accused legislator may see the complaint and the report.

(c) If no finding is made under subsection (a) of this section, the Joint Ethics Committee shall prepare an allegation summary, based on its examination under subsection (a) of this section, setting forth the alleged facts and the issues then known that merit further proceedings.

(d) After review of a complaint, the Joint Ethics Committee shall provide a statement of its findings to the accused legislator.

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